



2010 Minerals Yearbook

BURUNDI [ADVANCE RELEASE]

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF BURUNDI

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In 2010, Burundi accounted for about 2% of the world's production of tantalum. Domestic production of gold, limestone, niobium (columbium), peat, sand and gravel, tin, and tungsten, was not significant in global terms. Burundi was not a globally significant consumer of minerals. Manufacturing, mining, and energy accounted for 11% of Burundi's gross domestic product in 2009 (Banque de la République du Burundi, 2011, p. 2; Papp, 2011).

Production

The production of niobium increased by 175% in 2010; tantalum, by 173%; tin, by 50%; tungsten, by 35%; and peat, by 16%. Data on mineral production are in table 1 (Banque de la République du Burundi, 2011, p. 15).

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Artisanal mining employment in gold mining was about 4,000 workers; niobium, tantalum, and tin, 2,000 workers; and tungsten, 1,600 workers. Privately owned Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. also mined niobium, tantalum, and tin. State-owned Office National de la Tourbe (ONATOUR) was Burundi's only peat producer (Midende, 2010, p. 51).

Commodity Review

Metals

Cobalt, Copper, and Nickel.—Nyota Minerals Ltd. of Australia held the Muremera nickel project in northeastern Burundi. At the end of 2010, exploration was on hold because of the company's focus on its Ethiopian operations (Nyota Minerals Ltd., 2011).

Kermas Group of the United Kingdom held the licenses for the Musongati, the Nyabikere, and the Waga nickel-cobalt-copper deposits. Resources at Musongati were nearly 185 million metric tons (Mt) that graded 1.31% nickel, 0.17% copper, and 0.08% cobalt. The Nyabikere deposit had 46 Mt of resources that graded 1.45% nickel, and the Waga deposit had 35 Mt of resources that graded 1.38% nickel. In 2010, Kermas was engaged in a legal dispute regarding Musongati with Merlin Minerals Ltd. of the United Kingdom (African Mining, 1998; International Peace Information Service, 2010).

Niobium (Columbium) and Tantalum.—COMEBU mined columbite-tantalite at Kabarore in Kayanza Province,

and artisanal miners also mined it at various sites in Kayanza, Kirundo, and Ngozi Provinces. Based on exploration by COMEBU in 2003 and 2004, proved and probable columbite-tantalite reserves at Kabarore were estimated to be about 4,400 metric tons (t) (Midende, 2010, p. 48, 53).

Industrial Minerals

Cement.—Burundi's cement demand was estimated to be about 320,000 t in 2010. Cement prices were estimated to be about \$350 per metric ton in Burundi compared with \$120 per metric ton in Kenya and \$130 per metric ton in Tanzania. Burundi's cement prices were also substantially higher than those of neighboring landlocked countries that had high power and transportation costs, such as Rwanda (about \$300 per metric ton) and Uganda (nearly \$200 per metric ton). The relatively higher costs in Burundi could be attributable to the lack of domestic cement production (Renaissance Capital LLC, 2011, p. 9, 35).

Mineral Fuels

Peat.—ONATOUR produced peat from the Buyongwe, the Gisozi, the Gitanga, and the Matana deposits. In 2010, the company increased its output to 13,111 t from 11,352 t in 2009 because of new mining equipment and more reliable power supplies (Banque de la République du Burundi, 2011, p. 15).

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TABLE 1
BURUNDI: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity ²		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Gold, mine output, Au content ^e	kilograms	750	750	750	750	750
Niobium (columbium) and tantalum, ore and concentrate:						
Gross weight	do.	16,177	51,550	91,300 ^r	24,400 ^r	67,400
Nb content	do.	3,200	10,000	17,900 ^r	4,800 ^r	13,200
Ta content	do.	2,868	9,140	17,800 ^r	4,800 ^r	13,100
Peat		9,762	7,489	9,764	11,352 ^r	13,111
Tin, mine output:						
Gross weight		79	5	96 ^r	20 ^r	29
Sn content		46	2	40 ^r	8 ^r	12
Tungsten, mine output:						
Gross weight		668	455	393 ^r	248 ^r	337
W content		238	144	125 ^r	79 ^r	107

^eEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. ^rRevised. do. Ditto.

¹Table includes data available through January 17, 2012.

²In addition to the commodities listed, brick clay, limestone, and sand and gravel were produced, but available information is inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

TABLE 2
BURUNDI: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2010

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity		Major operating companies	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Gold	kilograms	Artisanal miners	At least 35 sites in Bubanza, Citiboke, Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga, and Ruyigi Provinces	750 ^e
Niobium (columbium) and tantalum, columbite-tantalite ore and concentrate		Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. (COMEBU)	Kabarore in Kayanza Province	6 ^e
Do.		Artisanal miners	Various sites in Kayanza, Kirundo, and Ngozi Provinces	85 ^e
Peat		Office Nationale de la Tourbe (ONATOUR)	Buyongwe, Gisozi, Gitanga, and Matana	20,000
Tin, cassiterite ore and concentrate		Comptoir Minier des Exploitations du Burundi S.A. (COMEBU) and artisanal miners	Various sites in Citiboke, Kayanza, Kirundo, Muyinga, and Ngozi Provinces	100 ^e
Tungsten, wolframite ore and concentrate		Artisanal miners	At least 10 sites in Kirundo and Muyinga Provinces	670 ^e

^eEstimated. Do. Ditto